In this response to the Number Portability consultation, I am
representing myself. I am an author of open source software related to
telecoms and specifically numbering. This software is available to all
for no charge, and is used both in the telecoms industry and by
consumers. One common use of the software is for consumers to see
which telco a number is assigned to and so figure out whether they can
(for
instance) call it for free.

I am happy for you to publish this correspondence at any time.

My responses to some of the questions on page 35 of the consultation
follow. I have not answered all of them, as not all are particularly
relevant to me.

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. no answer
4. The earlier the better.
5. no answer
6. It is important that the system implemented is open and transparent,
   and not just available to telecoms companies. There should be some
   form of public interface to the database. The data currently
   published on the OFCOM website indicating which number ranges are
   assigned to which telcos etc at:
     http://www.ofcom.org.uk/telecoms/ioi/numbers/numbers_administered/
   is a very useful resource, and something similar to it - ie,
periodic
   database dumps as opposed to the ability to perform live queries,
   would be sufficient.
7. no answer
8. Yes
9. no answer
10. no answer
11. no answer

I would also note that the situation regarding how calls to ported
numbers are billed is not communicated well to consumers by telcos.
Those few consumers who are even aware that number portability exists
have no way of telling in advance whether a call to a ported number
will be charged as if it were to the original telco or to the telco it
has been ported to. The current situation where calls are forwarded by
the original telco makes this particularly confusing. When (if)
ACQ/CDB is implemented, this will become somewhat clearer, but telcos
should still be required to point out to customers how these calls will
be billed.